

Cooperative Monitoring Evaluation and Research Committee
June 19, 2002
NWIFC Conference Center
Minutes

Attendees:

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| Bresler, Helen | DOE |
| Dieu, Julie | Rayonier |
| Dominquez, Larry | DNR Small Landowner Office |
| Edson, Scott | Colville Tribes |
| Fransen, Brian | Weyerhaeuser |
| Glass, Domoni | Consultant |
| Heide, Pete | WFPA |
| Jackson, Terry | WDFW |
| Keller, Steve | NMFS (?) |
| Liquori, Mike | Campbell Group |
| MacCracken, Jim | Longview Fibre |
| Martin, Doug | CMER Co-chair |
| McConnell, Steve | NWIFC |
| McNaughton, Geoff | Adaptive Management Program Administrator |
| Mobbs, Mark | Quinault Indian Nation |
| Parks, Dave | DNR |
| Peterson, Pete | Upper Columbia United Tribe |
| Poon, Derek | EPA |
| Prater, Brian | Campbell Group |
| Price, David | WDFW |
| Pucci, Dawn | Suquamish Tribe |
| Quinn, Tim | WDFW |
| Raines, Mary | NWIFC |
| Rowe, Blake | Longview Fibre |
| Rowton, Heather | WFPA |
| Schuett-Hames, Dave | NWIFC |
| Stringer, Angela | Campbell Group |

Minutes: April and May CMER committee minutes were approved as amended.

CMER Budget Update: Several new contracts have been awarded. We are not in danger of losing the project development funds as they will carry over. McNaughton will get more details about how this money will be carried over on Friday during the FFR Budget Committee meeting.

SAG Requests:

Request 1) BTSAG (background information distributed prior to meeting): This request relates to hemispherical photography equipment. Many people have suggested that BTSAG incorporate this type of information into the Bull Trout studies. This equipment will also be good to have for some RSAG projects. Since the project development funds can now be carried over, BTSAG is pursuing other funding to purchase/rent this equipment. The larger question is should we rent or buy the equipment.

Schuett-Hames said that it makes more sense to purchase this equipment than to pay contractors who will purchase the equipment and rent it to us. It is more difficult for us to access it when we do not own it. Rowe pointed out that it is difficult to have one piece of equipment for use on so many projects. The logistics would be difficult to coordinate. MacCracken said that you can actually download this software for free through a University project. Jackson will look into this as well.

Raines asked what the purpose of this is. Jackson explained that there is controversy surrounding the densiometer readings. This equipment will help to alleviate those concerns and will provide a control to compare the densiometer readings to.

Jackson withdrew the BTSAG request for project development monies to purchase this equipment. If BTSAG cannot find another way to finance the purchase, they may bring the request to CMER at a later date.

Request 2) MDT request: Schuett-Hames explained that Bill Ehinger would like to do some preliminary sampling of type NP streams in western Washington. He is asking for some of George McFadden's staff time to help him locate study sites on the ground. Ehinger does have a list but the MDT needs some footwork done to ensure that the sites chosen are adequate. Raines asked if this is a pilot study. Glass asked if it is appropriate to test a pilot before we know what design we will be using. There were comments on the MDT report that may substantially change the studies on the ground. Dieu commented that to do this is a good activity because there have been two masters theses from UW in the last two years and both have concluded that temperature controls on small streams are very poorly understood. There will be great variability on these streams.

Liquori asked why CMER needs to make this decision. If McFadden's time is used to help with coordination of all sites, then it is a management decision at the NWIFC, not a CMER decision.

Mobbs said that because this project has not gone through CMER, it is not a CMER work. This is a special case and generally, McFadden will prioritize his own time.

CMER Recommendation: McFadden should assist Ehinger with study site coordination.

Request 3) Hardwood Conversion project. McConnell said that early on, RSAG had requested SRC review of this study plan. There are many suggestions from Policy and one of them was to have the contractors design the study plan; therefore it seemed prudent to recommend that the study plan be reviewed to ensure its scientific rigor. Policy also specified, however, that the study be done as "operational trials" or case studies. Further, it was recognized that the number of available study sites was likely to be limited so the opportunity for replication is limited. A study involving case studies without replication or statistically valid comparisons across treatments does not require scientific review. The data collection methodologies proposed for this study are standard, so, there is no need for SRC review of these. CMER can save time and money by opting to forego SRC Review. Pucci expressed concern about using case studies, and not statistically tested, hypothesis driven science, for adaptive management. McConnell noted that this is a special case dictated by policy as a direct result of the outcome of negotiations on the hardwood conversion rules and will not be the normal procedure for CMER studies. McConnell added that this project is intended primarily to inform alternate plans. Price said that if the rule is contentious, the goal should be to modify the rule not to do alternate plans across the landscape. Rowe reminded him that policy has recommended this path and has already answered this question.

McNaughton pointed out that the FPB approved a project summary (one paragraph) that does not clearly explain the project in that Policy understands this project to address the current rule when in fact it is likely to be more informative for implementing hardwood conversion through the alternate plan process. Bresler said that we should go back to the FPB with this and clearly explain our purpose. We should also go back to policy and explain the implications of this. Schuett-Hames noted that opting to not have SRC review now does not preclude the possibility that study results will go to SRC for review once the project is completed.

CMER recommendation: The study plan for this project should not go to the SRC for review.

SRC Update: McNaughton said that we are in the process of negotiating a new contract with the University. Martin and McNaughton have met with the UW to talk about the problems that we are having. There have been problems with support for SRC people, but the UW maintains that they are supportive of this. We all must do a better job of outreach about what this program is. We may also need to make presentations to the UW faculty. McNaughton said the contract may not be completed on time because for the UW to sign a contract with us, they need the WSU portion in place and it is not there yet. The overhead rate is still under negotiation. Jackson noted that BTSAG has recently had a very successful review and she would hope for open communication in the future. Martin added that this is a pioneer program. He also said that we need to clarify how the SRC reviews are being used by CMER.

Raines suggested that McNaughton and Martin draft something and put it in the CMER handbook.

CMER Communication Strategy

Rowton provided a brief description of the CMER / Policy Communication Strategy. Two key elements are the workplan and the Protocols and Standards manual. Both documents are scheduled for completion, at least in draft form, by early September. The workplan group is meeting regularly and the Protocols and Standards group will meet soon.

Review Draft Road Map for N Streams (Workplan): handout attached.

Martin provided a very initial draft product. A subgroup has been meeting and Martin has captured their ideas in this draft. The workplan is being built around rule groups. Studies will all relate to FFR management goals. We are measuring the effectiveness in terms of these goals. All projects that are currently going on will need to fit into the workplan around rule groups. The group is identifying key effectiveness questions, what tools we need to address the questions, validation needs, effectiveness needs and policy needs. Martin is requesting feedback on this from everyone. Early feedback is the key to ending up with a workplan that clearly communicates to policy what we are doing. Liquori suggested that we use the stakeholder group to help us with this.

When the workplan is close to completion, CMER will need to make some decisions about how they will prioritize to accomplish goals. McNaughton said that people should explore the Northwest Power Planning Council website as well. They have a workplan there that we can look to for ideas.

Assignment: Sags will go through projects and try to fit them within this framework and then a group will integrate the drafts. The rule groups are: Riparian strategies for N- streams, Riparian strategies for F-streams, Mass Wasting, Roads, Fish Passage and Wetlands. Martin's group will continue with the Type N-streams rule group.

SAG Issues and Concerns Discussion

LWAG: a stakeholder meeting was held to discuss the RMZ Resample study. The study was then presented to policy for a decision. Policy had a question about how this study fits into the larger budget picture. They also requested a recommendation from CMER as to whether or not the study should go forward based on the \$795,000 study cost. There has been confusion surrounding the initial CMER recommendation. Some CMER members prioritized the study based on a \$200,000 complete cost, rather than the \$795,000 cost.

Pucci said that the Tribes will not hold this project up, but they have serious reservations about it and they would like their concerns, regarding the validity of science and FFR application, the funds required and potential under-funding for future wildlife studies, noted for the record. The Tribes request that CMER ensures the results of this study go through SRC when completed.

Glass expressed concern regarding the lack of funds for future wildlife studies. Martin expressed concern with the amount of money this one project requires. Peterson said that when he had originally voted on funding for this project, it was based on a \$200,000 spending level and the fact that it would provide a lot of information for the money because of its on-going nature. He was concerned that a multi-year commitment could exhaust the state funds that might be needed later for SAGE adaptive management, wildlife related projects."

CMER Recommendation: CMER recommends the RMZ resample at \$795,000.

Raines requested that LWAG provide CMER with a write-up of how the SRC review went on this.

SAGE: They have had extensive discussion about bull trout on the eastside. The WDFW has a policy out stating that all culverts should be brought up to standard. Replacing all culverts is causing problems for bull trout because it is admitting brook trout into bull trout habitat. This is an implementation issue. Heide asked if he could see the written policy. Price indicated that this is regional guideline, not policy. The issue has policy and scientific implications. Opening the culvert may also enhance gene flow. There was much discussion about how to handle this issue. ISAG and BTSAG may want to decide how they would like to see the problem addressed, policy members should be briefed on the issue but should not be presented with options yet. Wetlands could also fall into this category. Poon said that there are legal implications and decisions that have spoken to this issue (i.e., no introduction of non-native species on top of listed species is permitted as it creates a take liability). USFWS has the opposite opinion, they believe that opening the habitat is good. SAGE should ask BTSAG and ISAG to address this issue.

ISAG: Fransen said that the fish habitat modeling workshop is scheduled for 7/16 and an e-mail will be forwarded with the details soon.

BTSAG: Jackson distributed a memo outlining study sites needs for the Bull trout overlay study. She asked that if people know of any sites that fit the criteria, they forward them to her.

Next CMER meeting: 7/18

Next Science Topic: review matrices, discuss workplan for each rule group.